



POLICY J: TRAVEL APPROVAL & REIMBURSEMENT

Wyoming Guardians *Ad Litem* Program

Empowering youth & families through legal advocacy

SECTION ONE: PURPOSE AUTHORITY & SCOPE

- A. This policy was created pursuant to Wyoming Statute § 14-12-103(d) and the Wyoming Guardians Ad Litem (GAL) Program Rules and Regulations, Chapter 1, § 2(b). The purpose of this policy is to set forth the guidelines for travel requests, reimbursements, approval, and related expenses.
- B. This policy encompasses all guardians *ad litem* attorneys contracted or employed with the State of Wyoming, Office of the State Public Defender, Guardians *Ad Litem* Program to provide GAL services in Wyoming and all Guardians *Ad Litem* Program Administrative Staff.
- C. Violations of these provisions may be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

SECTION TWO: PART-TIME CONTRACTED GALs

- A. If the GAL is traveling in-state (and out of the GAL's home county) and not requiring lodging, the GAL does NOT have to seek prior approval for their trip. These trips, without lodging, will not be reimbursed for any travel expenses or meals. The GAL will only be paid for their time to travel at the rate set by their contract.
- B. If the GAL is traveling in-state or out-of-state necessitating an overnight stay and lodging, the GAL MUST seek prior approval for their trip. Absent emergency situations, this approval must be sought at least ten (10) days before the commencement of their travel. For approval of travel, the GAL must submit a Travel Request Form to the GAL Program Director. This form can be found on the GAL Program website.
- C. On this Travel Request Form, the GAL must fill in all requested information, including the following: 1) client's name, 2) docket #, 3) total anticipated travel time to be billed to the Program upon return and 4) total anticipated time with client to be billed to the Program upon return.
- D. State agencies are required to show proof of internal control on administrative charges such as travel. In order to meet this demand, the Travel Request Form must also include a brief description stating why the travel is necessary and why it cannot be completed via telephone, e-mail, or video conferencing technologies

- E. In order to receive travel reimbursement a GAL must complete a WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher upon return. This amount is not to be included on the GAL Monthly Invoice with the attorney's time. The travel voucher is due 20 days from the end of the month in which the travel occurred. This voucher can be found on the GAL Program website.

SECTION THREE: FULL-TIME CONTRACTED GALS

- A. If the GAL is traveling in-state and not requiring lodging or other reimbursable expense, the GAL does NOT have to seek prior approval for their trip. The GAL will be paid mileage for these trips at the current state reimbursement rate (for the time of the travel) upon submission of a WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher. Only one Voucher may be submitted each month and is due 20 days from the end of the month in which the travel occurred.
- B. In some circumstances, depending on the frequency of travel required for the caseload, a full-time contracted GAL may be asked to use a state vehicle instead of their personal vehicle. If this request is made of you, please consult with the GAL Program State Care Coordinator for your county.
- C. Failure to use a state car when requested by the GAL Program will result in denial of the incurred travel expenses, unless prior approval was given to the traveler due to weather or other extreme situations.
- D. If the GAL is traveling in-state or out-of-state necessitating an overnight stay and lodging, the GAL MUST seek prior approval for their trip. This approval must be sought at least ten (10) days before the commencement of their travel. For approval of travel, the GAL must submit a Travel Request Form to the GAL Program Director. This form can be found on the GAL Program website.
- E. On this Travel Request Form, the GAL must fill in all requested information, including the following: 1) client's name, 2) docket #, 3) total anticipated travel time and 4) total anticipated time with client.
- F. State agencies are required to show proof of internal control on administrative charges such as travel. In order to meet this demand, the Travel Request Form must also include a brief justification stating why the travel is necessary and why it cannot be completed via telephone, e-mail, or video conferencing technologies.
- G. In order to receive travel reimbursement for expenses a GAL must complete a WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher upon return. This amount is not to be included on the GAL Monthly Invoice with attorney's time. The travel voucher is due 20 days from the end of the month in which the travel occurred, same time deadlines as the monthly invoicing.

SECTION FOUR: EMPLOYEES OF THE GAL PROGRAM

- A. If the GAL is traveling in-state and not requiring lodging or other reimbursement, the GAL does NOT have to seek prior approval for their trip. The GAL will be paid mileage for these at the current state reimbursement rate (for the time of the travel) upon submission of a WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher. Only one Voucher may be submitted each month and is due 20 days from the end of the month in which the travel occurred, same time deadlines as the monthly invoicing.
 - I. Cheyenne Exception: Due to the close availability of state motorpool vehicles in Cheyenne, all GAL employees in Cheyenne need to schedule their in-state travel as described above with the GAL Program Fiscal Specialist so that a state car can be reserved for the trip. Mileage will not be reimbursed to Cheyenne GAL employees unless prior approval was given through the Travel Request Form approval process. A state vehicle must be used for these trips.
 - II. In some circumstances, depending on the frequency of travel required for the caseload, a GAL employee may be asked to use a state vehicle instead of their personal vehicle.
- B. If the GAL is traveling in-state or out-of-state necessitating an overnight stay and lodging, the GAL MUST seek prior approval for their trip. Absent emergency situations, this approval must be sought at least ten (10) days before the commencement of their travel. For approval of travel, the GAL must submit a Travel Request Form to the GAL Program Director. This form can be found on the GAL Program website.
- C. On this Travel Request Form, the GAL must fill in all requested information, including the following: 1) client's name, 2) docket #, 3) total anticipated travel time and 4) total anticipated time with client.
- D. State agencies are required to show proof of internal control on administrative charges such as travel. In order to meet this demand, the Travel Request Form must also include a brief justification stating why the travel is necessary and why it cannot be completed via telephone, e-mail, or video conferencing technologies.
- E. In order to receive travel reimbursement for expenses a GAL must complete a WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher upon return. The travel voucher is due 20 days from the end of the month in which the travel occurred, same time deadlines as the monthly invoicing.
- F. A full-time GAL employee may be reimbursed actual costs for meals when on an official one day roundtrip.

- I. The employee must prepare the AUD-EXP, Meal Expense/per Diem Voucher For One Day Round Trips, when requesting reimbursement for meal expense(s) incurred while on an official one day roundtrip. Total reimbursement cannot exceed seventy-five (75%) of the daily meal and incidental expense allowance for the location of the official business. This form must be submitted within fifteen (15) days of the one-day trip.
- II. Documentation Required: The employee must keep receipts, as these meals are reimbursed only at actual cost. The receipt or invoice must contain an itemized statement of goods received and/or services performed. The key word is itemized. It must specify the vendor's name and address, recipient of the goods or services, description and amount of each item, and the date such goods or services were received.
- III. In accordance with IRS Regulations, such reimbursements must be reported on the Employee's W-2 form. The IRS has taken the position that reimbursement for one-day meal expenses is taxable income. One-day meal reimbursements will be added to the employee's salary and all income taxes will be withheld accordingly.
- IV. Gratuities Exception: Gratuities on actual meals is an allowable expense, up to 20% of the cost of the meal. A receipt is required.

SECTION FIVE: ALL EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS

- A. A GAL will not be reimbursed for actual lodging if it exceeds the "maximum lodging rate." These rates, by county and state, can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>. The original receipt for the lodging must be attached to the WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher.
- B. A GAL will not be reimbursed for actual meals, only the set M&IE for the county and state. Therefore, GALs will not submit their meal receipts to the Program. The M&IE rates can be found on the same page as the lodging rates, <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>. These rates are the State of Wyoming accepted reimbursement rates in accordance with the State Auditor's Office Travel Instructions, http://sao.state.wy.us/Travel/Travel_Instructions.pdf. The only exception to this rule is for full-time GAL employees and one-day travel as described in section 4 above.
- C. The mileage on the WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher is not actual mileage. It is the mileage set by the state and attached to the WOLFS-104 form, and the GAL Travel Request Form for in-state travel (sheet name is "mileage table"). For out-of-state travel, the mileage is the total mileage given by MapQuest, a print-out of which should be attached to the voucher upon submission. Mileage is calculated city to city, not address to address or zip-code to zip-code.

- D. The mileage rate can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715>. This rate is the State of Wyoming accepted reimbursement rate in accordance with Executive Order 2008-1.
- E. Additional instructions and information on completing the WOLFS-104 Travel Expense Voucher can be found in the Wyoming State Auditor's Office Travel Reimbursement Instructions, which can be found online at: http://sao.state.wy.us/Travel/Travel_Instructions.pdf.
- F. Travel expenses charged to the State shall be for the benefit of the State and completed using the most economical means available which will satisfactorily accomplish the State's business, in accordance with state policies.
- G. It is the responsibility of the contractor, employee, their immediate supervisor, and the agency director or designee to assure that all travel expenses charged to the State are for the benefit of the State, are necessary and are completed at the most reasonable cost.
- H. If the GAL has questions on this policy, the procedures or needs assistance in completing the necessary forms, they can contact the GAL Program Policy & Fiscal Analyst with any questions or concerns.

SECTION SIX: INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

- A. In addition to M&IE and lodging expenses, the following actual expenses incurred as a necessary part of approved travel (and pre-approved) may be claimed. NOTE: Receipts shall be required for ALL lodging claims and ALL other claims on the voucher, regardless of amount.
 - I. Registration/Conference Fees (Receipt and Agenda required regardless of amount).
 - II. Commercial Transportation Cost Actually Paid by the Traveler.
 - III. Parking Fees.
 - IV. Mileage for Approved Use of Private Vehicle.
 - V. Road Toll Charges.
 - VI. Other miscellaneous reimbursable expenses as approved by the agency director or designee.
- B. The following expenses are not authorized for reimbursement:

- I. Entertainment Expenses.
- II. Personal expenses incurred during travel which are primarily for the benefit of the traveler and not directly related to the official purpose of the travel. Examples include the purchase of personal hygiene items, magazines, snacks, personal phone calls, movie rentals, and other miscellaneous items.
- III. Personal travel insurance expenses paid by the traveler.
- IV. Alcoholic Beverages.
- V. Mileage reimbursement to and from residence and work.
- VI. Expenses of contractor's or employee's spouse or personal guest.
- VII. Optional entertainment/social events that occur in conjunction with conferences/seminars.
- VIII. Laundry/valet charges.
- IX. The cost of traffic fines and tickets, including parking tickets.
- X. The cost of expenses caused by driver error pertaining to the use of either a personal or state owned vehicle (ex. towing charges due to parking violations, locksmith fees related to employee locking keys inside vehicle, etc.).
- XI. Any expenses not pre-approved.